



Air Citizen MAN

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REACHING FOR THE SKY

Pararescueman
goes to the top of
the world for vets
... Page 12

By Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson
Commander,
Air Force Reserve Command



A Team of Leaders at Every Level

I'm pleased to welcome the new command chief master sergeant of Air Force Reserve Command, Chief Master Sgt. Cameron Kirksey, to our leadership team. He brings 25 years of service, experience and leadership to this important position.

I'd like to start with a story that demonstrates his character and servitude. Chief Kirksey had been on the job for just two days when we visited Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass. He was speaking at the newcomer's briefing to a room full of new Airmen. He asked the youngest Airman, "How many people work for you?" Not surprisingly, the Airman responded, "No one, chief." Chief Kirksey's response was simple: "You all have at least one person working for you. ... me."

Chief Kirksey believes in servant leadership. He believes, as I do, that every Airman holds the potential to make a difference within the Air Force Reserve. As I've written, one of my focus areas for the Air Force Reserve is to "develop the team." One aspect of this is force development. Another is the team itself.

Quality teams possess leadership at all levels. Outstanding leaders transform good organizations into great ones. The Air Force Reserve is an exceptional organization because we foster leadership at all levels.

I need leaders at every level who can balance the needs of the mission with the needs of the people doing the mission. These leaders are not necessarily defined by their rank but by their ability to keep the team united and mission on track. In today's fiscal environment, the challenges are even greater. We need teamwork more than ever to increase our effectiveness.

This teamwork goes beyond just the Air Force Reserve. We are one component of the Total Force team, and each of you plays a key role. Every member contributes to the nation's defense, through the efforts of the Air Force team. Our shared missions necessitate Air Force Reservists bring their experience and leadership to the joint fight.

Continuing your personal growth will further strengthen the Air Force team and enhance your ability to be a leader in your organization. In his commentary, Chief Kirksey shares his five keys to individual success, which, in turn, strengthen our team. I look forward to working with Chief Kirksey in growing leaders for the Air Force Reserve and our nation. You can look forward to seeing Chief Kirksey and I traveling to your organizations and units in the near future so you get a chance to meet this impressive Airman!

Thanks for all you do!

By Chief Master Sgt. Cameron B. Kirksey
Command Chief Master Sergeant,
Air Force Reserve Command



The Stronger the Individual, the Stronger the Team

I'm honored and humbled to serve as your command chief. I appreciate the confidence Lt. Gen. Jackson has in me and look forward to working with each of you.

As a career Reservist, I was elated to be selected as command chief for the 908th Airlift Wing, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and even more honored to be selected as command chief for the 482nd Fighter Wing, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla. In both instances, I was fortunate to work with a great team of individuals.

In General Jackson's commentary, he discusses how leadership is essential for a great team. I'd like to briefly focus your attention on the leadership traits of the individual. Aristotle once said, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Every self-improvement initiative we accomplish as individuals strengthens the team collectively. Therefore, in an effort to bolster individual growth for the betterment of the team, I submit to you five leadership principles that have proven to be successful

in my team-building endeavors: humility, loyalty, trust, respect and being a team player.

Humility is the first principle. We all have strengths. We are all selflessly serving our great nation. However, if we are too focused on ourselves, we fail to emphasize the importance of the team. Remaining humble helps to ensure that the team respects all individuals for their strengths and values their inputs.

Loyalty is the second principle and is defined as faithfulness or devotion to a person or group. Loyalty is essential in creating a positive working relationship and paramount in building cohesiveness. As Citizen Airmen, we are committed to serving our country. We rely on each other to show up for duty, maintain readiness, and be mentally and physically prepared to serve.

Trust is the third principle. Trust is a derivative of competence and personal character. Being proficient at your job and adhering to your moral compass demonstrates your trustworthiness to the team.

Respect is the fourth principle and has two different facets. The first is treating everyone equally. Our strength is in our diversity. The second is earning the respect of others. To earn respect, we must first show respect. We should always be mindful of treating each other with dignity and respect — it's the right thing to do and doesn't cost us anything!

The fifth leadership principle is being a team player. We need teamwork at every level, in every job, by every member. Teamwork is what allows us to fly, fight and win. ... in air, space and cyberspace. It's what makes us valued members of the Total Force team. Teamwork makes the dream work! Individually, we are strong. ... together, we are stronger.

I'm here for you!



Kirksey and Jackson meet with Master Sgt. Alexander Cotton during a recent visit with Airmen at the 439th Airlift Wing, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.

SENIOR AIRMAN KELLY GALLOWAY

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Reservist, wife team up to promote literacy, environmental issues



On the cover: Staff Sgt. Nick Gibson, a pararescueman with the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., was a member of the all-military team that climbed the tallest mountain peak on each of the seven continents as part of the USAF 7 Summits Challenge. The challenge culminated with a climb of Mount Everest, the world's tallest mountain. See the complete story on Page 12.

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

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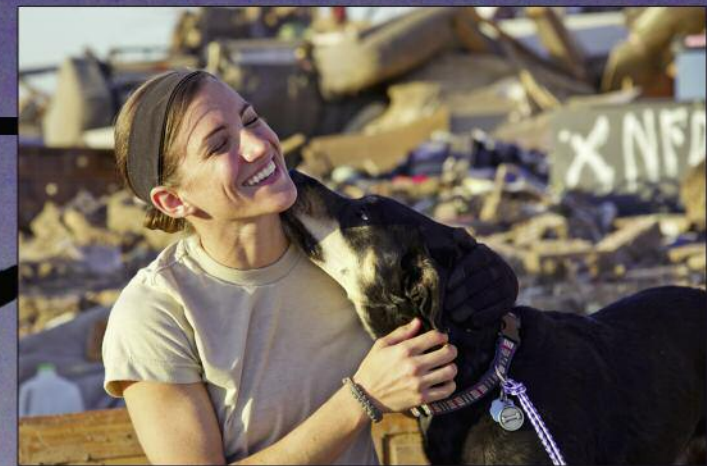
Master Sgt. Steven Feliz, an aerial spray maintainer assigned to the 910th Airlift Wing at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, opens the nozzles on a spray boom of a modular aerial spray system mounted to a C-130 Hercules on the flight line at Joint Base Charleston, S.C., in June. Members of the 910th conducted spraying operations over the base's Naval Weapons Station to control the population of disease-carrying pest insects. The wing's 757th Airlift Squadron is home to the Department of Defense's only large-area, fixed-wing aerial spray capability. (Senior Airman Dennis Sloan)

Reserve Snapshot



Members of the Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., Fire Department extinguish a fire outside the burning fuselage of a mock aircraft during live fire training recently. Fires can heat up the mock aircraft to approximately 1,200 degrees. The aircraft live fire training consists of responding to the fire, setting up on the aircraft, deploying hose lines, and attacking and extinguishing the fire. (Senior Airman Nicholas Caceres)

Tech Sgt Joe Parker, a KC-135 Stratotanker boom operator with the 336th Air Refueling Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., refuels an F-35A Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter from the 58th Fighter Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The 33rd is a joint graduate flying and maintenance training wing that trains Air Force, Marine, Navy and international partner operators and maintainers of the F-35. (Master Sgt. John R. Nimmo Sr.)



Staff Sgt. Caroline Hayworth, 4th Combat Camera Squadron, receives a friendly lick from a thankful dog after he was pulled from the remains of a home three days after a tornado wreaked havoc in Oklahoma in May. (Mike Meinhardt)



A remains recovery team combs the flight line and surrounding areas for "human remains" from a simulated plane crash that took place as part of a mass accident response exercise at Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station, N.Y., recently. (Staff Sgt Stephanie Clark)

A 23rd Special Tactics Training Squadron student guards the perimeter in a counter-insurgency exercise on the range at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The exercise provided critical training in counter-insurgency tactics, land navigation and mission planning to potential Air Force combat controllers. (Tech. Sgt. Cheryl Foster)

ROUND THE RESERVE

Command Gets New Enlisted Leader

A Reservist with 25 years of military service is the new command chief master sergeant for Air Force Reserve Command.

Chief Master Sgt. Cameron B. Kirksey, formerly the command chief for the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., replaced Chief Master Sgt. Kathleen Buckner at Headquarters AFRC, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson, AFRC commander, selected Kirksey for the top enlisted spot in the command.

"I am very privileged that after an extremely thorough interview and selection process, General Jackson had the confidence and trust in my capability and capacity to select me as the AFRC command chief," Kirksey said. "For that, I am both humbled and honored."

A native of Silas, Ala., Kirksey enlisted in the Air Force Reserve in March 1988. His background is in the logistics career field, specializing in fuels management. He spent most of his career at Maxwell AFB, Ala., rising from a fuels specialist to become the 908th Airlift Wing command chief. He transferred to Homestead ARB in June 2011 to fill the command chief billet at the 482nd FW.

Kirksey said his first priority is to sit down with Jackson and learn his expectations and get an understanding of his intent, objectives, goals and policies.

As the top enlisted leader for one of the Air Force's largest major commands, Kirksey is keenly aware of the responsibilities that await him.

"I'm not a one-man show; from key positions in the private sector to leadership positions in the command, I believe that facilitating leadership and building teamwork is how to get the mission accomplished efficiently and effectively," he said. "Contrarily, I will make the hard call and stand by my decision when the buck needs to stop at me."

Kirksey said his new job is about leadership.

"In the words of Gen. Colin Powell (former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), 'Leadership is solving problems. The day Soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or concluded you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership,'" he said.

"Again, I am truly grateful for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Kirksey said. "I look forward to being the eyes, ears and voice of our enlisted ranks to General Jackson, and I want every Airman who is a part of AFRC to know that I am extremely honored to serve them as their senior enlisted leader." (*Staff Sgt. Alexy Saltekoff, AFRC public affairs*)

Exchange Service Transitioning to New Uniform

As the Air Force transitions from the airman battle uniform, or ABU, to the rip-stop airman battle uniform, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service will no longer be able to order the ABU once the Defense Logistics Agency's stock is depleted.

"While the ABUs will still be authorized for wear, they will not be carried in exchange military clothing stores, as the RABU will completely replace the older, heavier ABU," said Chief Master Sgt. Tony Pearson, the exchange service's senior enlisted adviser.

The RABU is a lighter, nylon/cotton blend that has been available for Airmen at military clothing stores since June 2012. The RABU is also cooler than the ABU and features a wrinkle-resistant finish.

Military members can access the exchange's military clothing store at www.shopmyexchange.com by clicking "Military Clothing Store" under the store locator link at the bottom of the page or locate the nearest military clothing brick and mortar location through the store locator link at www.shopmyexchange.com/exchangestores/. (*Army & Air Force Exchange Service public affairs*)

Charleston Squadron Commander Achieves Air War College Honor

Continuing education is not only the foundation to advancing in the civilian world but is mandatory for excelling and moving up within the Air Force.

After completing two years of correspondence learning and attending professional military education seminars, Lt. Col. Cade C. Gibson, 315th Maintenance Squadron commander at Joint Base Charleston, S.C., attained the highest academic average among 2,256 distance learning program graduates (representing the various military services) of the Air War College. As a result, Gibson earned the Academic Excellence Award as the program's top graduate during graduation ceremonies May 23 at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

"I appreciate all the people who got me to that award," Gibson said. "I do not think I could have done it by myself. If I could go back to Cade Gibson as a 21-year-old and say, 'Hey, dummy, you can do much better if you actually studied and read the materials rather than just trying to cram it all in at the last minute,' I would tell my young self just that.

"It blows my mind that I had the best GPA (grade point average)."

The AWC's primary mission is to provide students with the opportunity to further develop their knowledge, skills and attributes to serve as strategic national security leaders. The curriculum prepares students to lead at the strategic level across the range of military operations, in joint, interagency and multinational environments; develop mastery of the air, space and cyberspace domains; and advance innovative thought on national security issues.

"The last class I had to take was a team exercise, so I really owe a lot to the people who were in the seminar with me," Gibson said. "My classmates were a big reason that the class went so well. I had a great group of people."

Gibson is no stranger to hard work and persistence when it comes to education. He holds a master of business administration degree from the University of South Carolina and a juris doctorate degree from Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law.

After wrapping up his law degree in 2006, Gibson took the bar exam just before deploying to the Middle East. The results weren't good.

"I was in the desert when the bar results came out, and I did not know what I made," Gibson said. "So, at about 1 a.m. I go over to my 'hooch' to check the results and find out that I failed.

"I did not want to take that exam again. So, I came back from the desert and had less than a month before the next bar exam. I thought to myself that I could just sit it out or I could just gamble and try to take it again. So, I took it again and that did not go well."

Gibson did not give up; it is not in his nature.



"You have these certain moments in life where you are like, 'God, I've really studied as much as I can. It's in your hands,'" he said. "You kind of become at peace with it. Then, I finally passed."

As a leader, Gibson does not ask of others what he himself will not do. He believes an individual must "walk the walk" while preparing for the future.

"I have 200 people who work for me, and if I am going to tell them, 'Hey, guys, you've got to do your PME, then I better do my PME,'" Gibson said. "It's not rocket science. If you want to get promoted, then you need to have the degrees. You need to position yourself to be ready for that next rank." (*Senior Airman Bobby Pilch, 315th Airlift Wing public affairs, Joint Base Charleston*)

Historic C-118A Aircraft Back on Display After Restoration

One of the most storied aircraft in the history of McGuire Air Force Base (now Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst), N.J., is back on display after more than 40 months of restoration.

A team of volunteers from various on- and off-base organizations helped restore the C-118A Liftmaster back to near-original condition.

Airmen from the Air Force Reserve's 514th Air Mobility Wing, and the active-duty's 305th AMW and 87th Air Base Wing put the aircraft back on display at a spot in the middle of the traffic circle near the passenger terminal March 30.

"What we're doing today is giving the aircraft a place of honor," said Senior Master Sgt. Christopher Hofrichter of the 514th Maintenance Operations Flight, who served as restoration project officer. "With this static display, we honor those people who died on the aircraft, the pilots and maintainers who kept it flying as well as the passengers who flew on it. It's their legacy that brought the U.S. Air Force to where it is today."

"It's a huge piece of not only American history but of McGuire history as well," said Aungelic Nelson, 305th AMW historian.

One of the aircraft's most famous legacies is that it gave Elvis Presley a ride on his return to the United States from his Army tour of duty in Europe.

Hofrichter views that legacy as only a piece of this Liftmaster's many claims to fame.

"This aircraft isn't a part of Elvis' history; Elvis is a part of this aircraft's history," he said.

The C-118 was the first cargo plane assigned to McGuire AFB in 1953 and began McGuire's transformation from a combat base to a mobility base, Nelson said.

This Liftmaster, as well as many other C-118s, contributed to operations Save Haven I and II, saving more than 14,000 Hungarian refugees from communist oppression in 1956 and '57.

It was then transferred to the U.S. Navy to continue its mobility mission after the aircraft's Air Force employment.

"A lot of people have turned wrenches on this Liftmaster, and a lot of people supported it," Hofrichter said.

The Navy operated the C-118 during the rest of the aircraft's flying time, which concluded at Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland.

Volunteers contributed more than 4,000 hours working on the aircraft's fuselage, interior, propeller blades and paint scheme since the renovation began in October 2009.

Maintainers from the 305th and 514th Maintenance Groups worked in their spare time to restore both the interior and exterior of the aircraft. Boy Scouts from Winslow High School, Troop 251, focused their efforts on restoring lighting in the aircraft.

Members of the Air Mobility Command Test and Evaluations Squadron, and even retirees who had previously flown on the airplane, assisted in various ways, including scraping paint from the historic aircraft. (*Staff Sgt. David Carbajal, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst public affairs*)

Squadron Adopts Brown Bag Approach to Professional Development

Air Force Reservists often bring a wealth of experience from their civilian jobs to the military mission.

When Lt. Col. Leslie Beavers took command of the 50th Intelligence Squadron at Beale Air Force Base, Calif., in March 2012, she decided a professional development program she had experienced in her civilian occupation would be a worthwhile focus for her unit.

"The program taught me to think more strategically and to focus my efforts on developing skills that would continually increase the value I brought to the organization," Beavers said. "These are the skills that ultimately made me successful in my interview process to become a squadron commander. I knew these same skills would benefit members of my squadron in both their military and civilian careers."

Enlisting the help of two members of her staff, Maj. David Roberts and Senior Master Sgt. Norman O'Brien, Beavers instituted the squadron's "Brown Bag Leadership" program. Its goal is to give Reservists assigned to the unit an opportunity to learn from each other and, in the process, discover more about themselves as leaders.

For O'Brien, the program has become a passion.

"There are a lot of smart guys out there who know the technical aspect of their job, but they don't know what they need to do to get further in their

careers,” O’Brien said. “And there are too many people in the role of leaders who just don’t understand the concept of it.

“This program is about equipping people with the tools they need to be good leaders. This professional development opportunity can provide today’s junior enlisted members with the leadership skills needed to become outstanding senior NCOs.”

The program resembles a book club rather than a military professional development course.

Participants form reading groups and select relevant books to read from a list of current professional development publications. Then, each month during the squadron’s unit training assembly, the group meets for a “brown bag” lunch to discuss the book.

Beavers is proud that the popularity of the brown

bag program has spread to the junior enlisted members of her squadron. Earlier this year, the Airmen began reading “The 360-degree Leader” by John C. Maxwell.

“Their primary challenge at this stage in their career is to lead without positional authority,” Beavers said. “This group’s discussion is focusing on empowering them now and preparing them for leadership positions in the future.”

O’Brien has observed another benefit to the squadron’s professional development program.

“Our squadron is composed of two distinct flights,” he said. “Before, problems were handled strictly within the flight. Since the start of the brown bag program, I’ve noticed our members are more open to advice from someone from the other flight.

We solve problems as a team now.

“I think this approach to professional development would be beneficial across the wing, our command and even the entire Air Force,” O’Brien said. *(Dana Lineback, 940th Wing public affairs, Beale AFB)*

Air Force Sets Plan to Integrate Women in Combat Jobs by 2016

The Air Force released details of the service’s plan to fully integrate women into previously closed career fields June 18.

The implementation plan was recently submitted to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel for review.

More than 99 percent of Air Force positions are

already open to female Airmen. In fact, 2013 marks the 20th anniversary of the Department of Defense allowing women to serve as combat pilots.

The Air Force plans to open the remaining seven career fields — all tied to special operations — by Jan. 1, 2016.

“The Air Force has been actively integrating women into nontraditional skills since 1972,” said Brig. Gen. Gina Grosso, the director of force management policy and deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. “Today, less than 1 percent of all positions — active, Guard and Reserve — are closed to women. This equates to approximately 4,700 positions in a total force of 506,000 people.”

The current career fields that do not allow females to enter due to the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule are combat rescue officer; special tactics officer; special operations weather officer; enlisted combat controller; enlisted tactical air command and control party; enlisted pararescue; and enlisted special operations weather.

According to the Air Force’s plan, the service will validate occupational fitness standards for every career field.

Once the standards are validated for the seven skills currently closed to women, the Air Force will notify Congress of its intent to open these skills to women and begin recruiting into these skills.

Grosso expects recruiting will begin in October 2015.

This implementation plan came as a result of former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta rescinding the 1994 Direct Ground Combat exclusion rule for women in January 2013. This rule restricted women from assignments in special operations and long-range reconnaissance units. *(Staff Sgt. David Salanitri, secretary of the Air Force public affairs)*

Doctor Continues Long-Time Participation in Humanitarian Efforts

An Air Force Reservist traveled to Sri Lanka as part of a medical team in late May and early June to continue his long-time association with a Department of Defense humanitarian program.

Col. (Dr.) Josef Schmid, deputy joint staff surgeon and Reserve mobilization assistant at the Pentagon, participated in a group of 15 active-duty Air Force, Army and Navy members who taught life-saving surgical skills to a group of 67 Sri Lankan military engineers. The trip was part of the DOD Humanitarian Mine Action Program, which assists countries affected by the presence of persistent land mines and other explosive remnants of war that maim and kill innocent people, obstruct emergency assistance activities, and hamper economic development.

The trip to Sri Lanka was Schmid’s 10th as a participant in the DOD’s Defense Institute for Medical Operations’ military-to-military training missions. The portion of the course he led originated in 2002 with members of the Air Force Reserve’s 433rd Medical Squadron in Texas. The first training took place in Nepal. The program has also taken the doctor to Rwanda, Romania and Bosnia-Herzegovina, among other locations.

“We taught advanced medical and surgical concepts normally reserved for paramedics and front-line physicians to be used by these engineers as they remove the many land mines left after the recent conflict in Sri Lanka,” Schmid said.

“This DIMO course is becoming the international standard for first-responder training throughout the Pacific Command, both for our own military medics and those of our friendly nations as well,” he said.

Schmid said the first week of the program consisted of training the engineers to assess patients and conduct rapid triage, perform life-saving procedures, and transport mass casualty patients to a medical facility. During the second week, members of the team oversaw and assisted the engineers as they conducted training for their colleagues. The training culminated with a mass casualty exercise.

“That’s the great thing about what these teams do,” Schmid said. “By training the trainers, the teams leave them with valuable skills that will continue to pay dividends in the future. The work does not end when the teams leave. Participants are able to build upon the successes after the teams leave.”

The doctor said he was extremely proud of what his team was able to accomplish with

Maintainers use simple solution to save money, wear and tear on C-130s

By Master Sgt. Daniel Butterfield

Aircraft maintainers at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., are testing a simple, yet innovative, idea that could save a lot of time and money as well as a significant amount of wear and tear on their C-130 aircraft.

Because of their versatility — being able to perform many types of missions while taking off from and landing on unimproved, unpaved dirt runways — C-130s take a beating. Rocks kicked up from landing in these rough environments can cause some significant damage.

In an effort to protect their aircraft, members of the 302nd

Maintenance Group at Peterson began applying protective tape to the fuselage of their C-130s to protect the plane’s belly. This tape proved to be so effective that the maintainers decided to take the idea one step further and test out the protective tape on the forward landing gear of one aircraft.

“The tape was originally approved to help prevent rock damage from unimproved landing strips,” said Senior Master Sgt. William Harris, 302nd MXS fabrication flight chief. “The landing gear takes as much or more impact from rocks. We want to prevent as much damage as possible to the main landing gear by applying the tape.”

According to Harris, the main landing gear struts cost approximately \$100,000 each and are rated for a four-year lifespan. But this full lifespan is rarely seen in today’s high operations tempo environment. He said two years is a much more realistic life expectancy because of the missions



Senior Airman Joseph Jennings, an aircraft structural apprentice, demonstrates how industrial tape is used to protect the C-130 Hercules’ forward landing gear struts. The 302nd Maintenance Group uses the tape to extend the life of the struts.

the aircraft are currently performing.

However, with the addition of the protective tape, Harris believes the full four years will again be the norm. And not only will strut replacement costs improve, but the MXG will save man-hours as well.

“To replace a single strut, it takes a two-person team from the repair and reclamation section eight hours,” Harris said. “That does not take into account all of the scheduling, hangar time and down time that pulls an aircraft off the flying schedule.”

The tape is an industrial-strength product that resists abrasions, punctures, tearing and erosion. It comes in rolls that are each large enough to cover 108 struts. The tape is easy to apply and creates no hazardous air pollutants.

The cost of materials and labor to install the tape is estimated at \$100 per strut. Unless punc-

tured by rocks, the tape remains in place throughout the complete serviceable life of the strut. If the tape is punctured or torn, maintainers will remove it and inspect the strut. The tape does not have a designated or set lifespan.

The C-130 Systems Engineering Program Office at Robins AFB, Ga., gave the 302nd MXG approval to apply the tape. Maintainers will

perform inspections after the first and 10th unimproved runway landing to

evaluate the success of the procedure. If successful, the program office will determine the feasibility of adding the tape to the aft struts of the test aircraft as well as struts on other C-130s at Peterson.

“The only issue is that the tape can only be installed on new struts,” Harris said. “If it was applied on struts with existing damage, we would only be covering up issues. This could result in future mishaps.”

“This operational test is the result of an idea that originated here in the 302nd from our own mechanics and took steadfast determination to bring it to fruition,” said Col. James Van Housen, 302nd MXG commander. “The first-class care we give our aircraft is not just aimed at extending their life span, but at making ours the best fleet of C-130s in the Air Force.” ★

(Butterfield is assigned to the 302nd Airlift Wing public affairs office at Peterson AFB.)

It’s Your Money

Conduct a Halftime Review

By Ralph Lunt

The first six months of the year are in our rearview mirror, and we are well into the second half of the year. As such, I thought it important to put into perspective what a positive and unusual year it has been for the stock market.

The fact is we haven’t seen first-half gains like this since the late 1990s. While this is certainly good news, and we should enjoy the paper gains, remember that markets go up and come down. Don’t expect these gains to continue forever.

I say this from a perspective of 20-plus years of experience. One behavior I have consistently witnessed over the years is that conservative investors tend to get into the market late because they don’t want to miss out on the great gains that they hear or read about. In the good times, it is imperative that you assess your risk tolerance and adhere to your comfort level as opposed to chasing returns.

I’m certainly not predicting anything, and I continue to be invested. I simply want to reinforce that before you invest or move money, you need to determine what percentage of your capital you want “at risk” and avoid the temptation of chasing returns. If during this evaluation you find that the gains of the past few years have you over-allocated to risk assets, it may be time to rebalance your portfolio. This, of course, is based upon your future needs, why you are saving/investing and your expectations for retirement.

Enjoy the rest of 2013 and remember the only thing you can control in the stock market is your exposure to it. Fly safe! ★

(Editor’s note: This feature is designed to provide financial advice and information of a general nature. Individuals should conduct their own research and consult a financial adviser before making any financial decisions. Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Lunt is a certified financial planner and vice president of a financial planning and consulting firm. He is also a colonel in the Air Force Reserve, serving as the reserve forces director of the Great Lakes Region of the Civil Air Patrol adviser’s program.)



the Sri Lankan engineers.

“They did an absolutely amazing job,” Schmid said. “Prior to this course, the engineers had undergone zero medical training. Now, I wouldn’t hesitate to take the Sri Lankan engineers and compete in any medical exercise or competition around the world.”

Reservists who are interested in participating in future DIMO missions should visit the organization’s website at www.DIMO.af.mil, click on the “Volunteer” tab near the top left of the page, and then download and fill out the “Volunteer Form” located at the bottom left. *(Staff reports)* ★

REACHING FOR THE SKY

Reserve pararescueman goes to top of the world for vets, saves lives on the way up

By Maj. Cathleen Snow

Pararescueman Staff Sgt. Nick Gibson is back from the world's tallest mountain — 20 pounds lighter and recovering from the harsh effects of high altitude but with a few world records to talk about.

He and five fellow Airmen became the first all-military team to summit the tallest peak on each of the seven continents as part of the USAF 7 Summits Challenge. The challenge culminated with the team summiting Mount Everest May 19. This was Gibson's first mountain challenge with the team due to a heavy overseas deployment schedule.

The team pierced snow on the summit with American and Air Force flags just after 5 a.m. in Nepal. Unfortunately, Gibson, a member of the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., had to turn around a mere 829 feet short of the summit due to contracting high altitude pulmonary edema, known as HAPE, a life-threatening buildup of fluid in the lungs. He was also in danger of getting frostbite.

Another member of the team, Capt. Colin Merrin, also had to stop the climb short of the summit because of illness.

While the physical challenge of the climb diminished his body, Gibson said nothing clouded his purpose.

"That mountain was climbed, I believe," he said.

Gibson joined the USAF 7 Summits Challenge to help warriors who face unseen mountains as a result of combat — particularly those suffering from post-traumatic stress

Staff Sgt. Nick Gibson, a pararescueman assigned to the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., was the go-to medic during the recent USAF 7 Summits Challenge team's quest to climb Mount Everest.

disorder — "who need our help. The key is learning to recognize the signs," he said.

Although he was disappointed that he wasn't able to reach the mountain's summit, Gibson's decision to stop short was grounded in the team's use of risk management principles. All members of the team were trained in risk management and used the principles to guide them throughout the climb.

"The Air Force Safety Center has been a strong supporter of this effort," said retired Col. Rob Suminsby, USAF 7 Summits Challenge co-founder, who supported the effort while remaining behind in the United States.

"These guys deserve a huge amount of credit, as they made one of the toughest decisions a climber can make: turning around short of the summit," Suminsby said. "Both made a good decision to turn back. The team was committed to safety throughout the process, and their actions are shining examples of how to do the right thing even when it's disappointing and not easy. A lot of people have been willing to sacrifice fingers or toes to reach the summit, but this team defined success from the outset as bringing everyone back in one piece."

As a pararescueman and a physician assistant student at Emory University in Atlanta, Gibson, the only Reservist and enlisted climber on this challenge, was responsible for providing medical assistance for the team. However, his expert medical care wasn't just limited to his team members.

"(Gibson) quickly earned a reputation as the go-to medic for everybody within earshot, especially at the higher camps where medical support was much harder to come by," said Maj. Rob Marshall, team leader and USAF 7 Summits Challenge co-founder.

Marshall said in addition to treating cuts and abrasions, 'Gibby,' as they called him, administered potentially life-saving treatments to climbers suffering symptoms of HAPE and high altitude cerebral edema, known as HACE.



Five members of the first all-military team to summit the tallest peak on each of the seven continents show their American and Air Force pride at the top of Mount Everest May 19. Unfortunately, Gibson had to turn around 829 feet short of the summit after contracting a life-threatening buildup of fluid in the lungs and being in danger of getting frostbite.

"This no doubt establishes some kind of record for the highest altitude work ever done by a an Air Force PJ (pararescue jumper)," Marshall said. "We are super proud to have him on the team."

On his way up the mountain, Gibson treated people from other teams hailing from all parts of the world. He helped stabilize a Chinese man suffering from HAPE who had to be medically evacuated to save his life.

"Our career field (pararescue) has a standard," Gibson said. "That standard is met by men who are willing to give their life to save someone else. That transpires into the same intensity and quiet professionalism in everything we do. My reputation as a PJ kept me in line with those standards."

Although staying healthy was his biggest challenge, Gibson was essential to helping others also meet that challenge.

"Even the Sherpas (guides) started

coming to me," he said.

The thinning air intensified the strain on everyone's bodies while they pushed beyond their physical limits, climbing dangerous icy slopes through freezing temperatures.

"I made the decision before setting out that I wasn't going to lose fingers or toes on the mountain. Toes and fingers represent my livelihood and my ability to help others," Gibson said.

He said risk management and assessment is essential in all aspects of life, especially on the unforgiving terrain of Everest.

"Plan and make decisions beforehand so when you are in difficult situations, you can make wise choices," Gibson said.

At an altitude of 28,200 feet, Gibson was fighting off exhaustion and frostbite when he made the decision to turn around.



Gibson reached a height of 28,200 feet before having to turn back. "I made the decision before setting out that I wasn't going to lose fingers or toes on the mountain. Toes and fingers represent my livelihood and my ability to help others," he said.

"I felt trapped between my body and the elements, and I knew who should win," Gibson said. "This is the place where I think people roll the dice. Not me — not with an entire medical career and all my family waiting for my return as a whole man."

Despite his disappointment, Gibson did manage to easily break his own personal climbing record of 14,500 feet.

"It was a great experience; I have no regrets," he said. "I wouldn't change my decisions. I made some very dear friends and was able to practice medicine at altitude. I feel good about that. If I defined this two-month trip by the summit, it would be inappropriate and disrespectful to everyone involved."

Looking back on what happened, Gibson said he is happy his illness wasn't more serious. If his symptoms had gotten worse as he progressed higher on the mountain, he might have been in trouble. He has been back for more than a month now and has been gradually healing.

"My body is still getting back to where it was before I left," Gibson said. "My energy level in general was diminished. It's great to be back. We are very fortunate here as Americans."

In addition to Gibson, members of the USAF 7 Summits Challenge Team are: Maj. Rob Marshall, a CV-22 Osprey acceptance pilot from Mercer Island, Wash., currently stationed at Bell Helicopter in Amarillo, Texas; Capt. Andrew Ackles, a TH-1N instructor pilot from Ashland, Ore., and stationed at Fort Rucker, Ala.; Capt. Marshall Klitzke, a KC-135R pilot from Lemmon, S.D., currently an instructor pilot at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.; Capt. Colin Merrin, a global positioning system satellite operations mission commander from Santee, Calif., stationed at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.; and Capt. Kyle Martin, a T-38/F-16 pilot from Manhattan, Kan., currently stationed at Langley AFB, Va. ★

(Snow is chief of public affairs for the 920th RQW at Patrick AFB.)



New Memories

Reservist returns to academy to command her former cadet squadron

By Amber Baillie

In 1995 Maj. DeAnna Franks attended the Air Force Academy in hopes of becoming an Air Force pilot. As a cadet, she studied behavioral sciences, competed on the women's swim team and often spent time with her classmates in Cadet Squadron 17, her assigned squadron freshman and sophomore year.

Eighteen years later, after experiencing defining years in the active-duty Air Force and Air Force Reserve, she has the opportunity to build new memories in CS-17 as the first Reserve Air Officer Commanding, a position she assumed during a change of command ceremony May 30 in Arnold Hall.

"I have intense pride for the academy, its legacy and traditions," Franks said. "The academy is an amazing place to be from and return to. I hope to share with cadets amazing experiences they will have in the Air Force and the great dimensions their career and life will take them in the upcoming years."

Franks was assigned to the academy in May 2012 to complete her master's degree in counseling and leadership, an Air Force Intermediate Developmental Education course. Franks accepted command of CS-17 from Maj. Bob Bryant and is the only Reservist among the academy's 21 newly assigned AOCs.

"The Reserve is another avenue that many cadets can think of for their future in order to continue their military career after their active-duty time," Franks said. "My experiences since graduating from the academy have been full of surprises, challenges and many successes. My transition from active duty to the Reserve allowed for my family to grow while continuing with my Air Force career and flying opportunities."

Franks said a typical cadet squadron consists of approximately 100 cadets representing all four class years.

"In this role, I will help to guide and advise the fall semester cadet squadron commander and his staff through outlining their goals for the semester and training plans, and focusing on the growth, character and leadership development of the cadets in CS-17," Franks said.

Originally from Orlando, Fla., Franks isn't the only member of her family who has experienced cadet life at the academy. Her father graduated from the academy in 1973 and her brother in 2002.

"I can share my strong family background and military history with the cadets," Franks said. "I also look forward to instructing cadets in the powered-flight program and motivating them for their future flying careers."

Franks said she learned about the Reserve lifestyle when she was stationed as an instructor pilot at Vance Air Force Base, Okla., and had four Reserve instructor pilots assigned to her flight.

"I was always very impressed with the military pride

and dedication they had to my flight of students and their career progression," the major said.

In 2007, Franks left active duty and joined the Reserve to start a family. She now has a 6-year-old daughter, Haylee.

"Total force is truly the mission of the Air Force. It takes the work and dedication of all units: active duty, Reservists and Guardsmen to accomplish our nation's good work," Franks said. ★

(Baillie is a staff writer for Academy Spirit, the official base newspaper for the Air Force Academy.)



Maj. Deanna Franks is the first Reserve Air Officer Commanding of a cadet squadron at the Air Force Academy. She is the AOC for the same squadron she was assigned to as a cadet.



Along with dressing remains, Mable Justice also molds features and applies makeup to remains that are unrecognizable when they come through the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Office at Dover Air Force Base, Del.

It's Not a Job, It's Her Calling

Reservist cares for, honors fallen service members

Story by Tech. Sgt. Matthew Bates, photos by Senior Airman Andrew Lee

Moving a small brush lightly, Mable Justice applies a coat of makeup to the face of a young Soldier. She pauses, studying her work, and then touches up several spots on his cheeks and brow with a flick of her wrist.

The room she's in is large, cold and sterile — all-white walls, stainless steel and cluttered with various types of medical equipment. The only sounds are the constant hum of a machine circulating air through several vents in the ceiling and the occasional swoosh and ting as Justice applies cosmetics and swaps tools.

She smiles as she works, her hands expertly applying cosmetics and bringing the young man's features to life.

She wants him to look perfect, like he did when he was still alive. Like he did before duty called him to the Middle East, and war and weapons sent him home in a transfer case.

As a mortician at the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Office, Dover Air Force Base, Del., Justice has seen many of these transfer cases. Some contain Soldiers, some Airmen or Marines or Sailors. Others contain only body parts.

No matter the state of the remains, Justice's job is to take

them, clean them, dress them and prepare them for delivery to their families. This preparation includes using cosmetics and other beauty products to enhance the appearance of these mens' and womens' remains.

It's a job most couldn't or wouldn't want to do. But Justice doesn't look at it as a job. She looks at it as a calling.

"These service members gave their lives for our country," she said. "So doing this, making them look nice and putting them in their uniforms one last time, I look at it as a way to honor them. ... to show them the respect they deserve."

She may be at peace with her job now, but there was a time when it was the last thing in the world she would ever think of doing.

There was a time, after finding out she was being sent to AFMAO, all she could do was say one, small prayer over and over.

"God, give me strength."

Answering the Call

Justice, who is a technical sergeant in the Air Force Reserve,

said this prayer over a decade ago. She was driving from her home in Maryland to Dover AFB to report for an assignment at AFMAO, and she was nervous, anxious and scared.

"Being in Services (Air Force Services career field), I knew the possibility existed for me to get assigned here," she said. "But then I actually got orders and was told I would be handling remains, and I just couldn't imagine myself doing that."

Justice called her sister while driving and asked for her prayers. Then, she started praying herself.

"I prayed a lot during that drive," she said.

When she finally arrived at Dover, it wasn't long before she realized her prayers had been answered.

"God sent me an angel, and it was the person I worked with," Justice said. "She was a staff sergeant, and she basically walked me through the whole process, and she was there to talk to me and guide me through what I needed to do."

What she needed to do was not easy, either. Whenever a service member is killed or dies overseas or in a training accident in the United States, the remains are sent to AFMAO. Once there, a team of medical examiners, embalmers and service members inspect and prep the remains for burial and deliver them to their family.

Justice's job was to help dress the remains in the uniform the family chose for burial.

"It's not something I wanted to do, not at all," she said. "But the longer I was here, the more I realized how important and special this mission is, and I was at peace."

This peace soon turned into desire. Several years later, on her second tour at AFMAO, Justice watched one of the embalming morticians applying makeup to a fallen service member. She felt drawn to the job.

"It was just like something happened inside of me, and I knew that this was my calling," she said. "I knew this is what I was created to do."

Returning home, Justice applied to study mortuary affairs at the closest university, which was 2 1/2 hours away.

"For two years I drove about five hours a day, just to go to school," she said.

The miles paid off, though, and Justice earned her degree and was one step closer to answering her calling.

The next hurdle was finding somewhere to complete her apprenticeship. This also wasn't easy, and distance was once again her enemy.

"The closest funeral home I found that would take me was located several hours away in Virginia," she said.

So, Justice once again logged a lot of miles and hours in her car as she worked at the funeral home and learned the ins and outs of mortuary affairs.

"The funeral home director told me he couldn't pay very much, but I told him I would do it for free. ... I just wanted to learn everything I could about being a mortician," she said.

He showed her everything he knew, and she soaked it up. Before she knew it, Justice

had fulfilled her internship and was considered a full-fledged mortician.

Taking her new title with her, Justice applied for a mortician position at AFMAO, was accepted and, once again, found herself in her car, headed to Dover. This time, though, she was saying a different prayer over and over.

"Thank you, Jesus."

Blessings and Honor

It's been almost five years since that day, but Justice still says the same prayer every day she leaves her house and heads to work.

"I feel blessed to do this job," she said. "I feel like I've truly answered my calling."

Justice doesn't do this job for herself, though. She does it for the families, friends and loved ones of the service members she sees come through her building.

"I just think how I would want to be treated if I came through here someday or if someone I knew or loved did," she said. "So I just treat these fallen service members the same way I would a member of my family."

This care doesn't go unnoticed, either.

"I get letters from family members who say thank you a lot," Justice said. "And that means a lot, because that's why I do it — for the families."

And as a last act of honor and respect for the fallen.

Justice looks over the Soldier she's been working on and nods approvingly. Two Airmen take the gurney he's lying on and wheel it out of the room and toward the next stage of his journey.

As the gurney leaves, Justice stares after it and says a quiet prayer. But this one is not for herself or for strength or for peace. This prayer is one of gratitude.

"Thank you and God bless." ★

(Bates and Lee are both Airman magazine staff members.)



Justice, the dress and restoration section chief for the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Office and an Air Force Reservist, believes she found her calling preparing fallen service members to be delivered to their families.



Be a Good Wingman

Know the signals that someone might be contemplating suicide

By Master Sgt. Mark R. Lis

In mid-May, I attended the funeral of a friend, classmate and fellow veteran. His passing marked the second time this year that a family friend had committed suicide. His troubles were many, and he hid them well. We spoke often and had many war stories to tell each other. I had seen him at least once a week at our Student Veterans Alliance meetings at a local community college, and he seemed to be no different than any other Afghanistan-Iraq veteran trying to find his way back into society.

On May 11, my friend was supposed to meet other Student Veteran Alliance members at the local cemetery to help decorate veterans' graves with new flags for the Memorial Day holiday. When he didn't show up, people started to wonder where he was and eventually notified the police of his disappearance. Later, his body was discovered in a local forest. This young man — a decorated Marine veteran of Afghanistan and Iraq, husband, father and hero — had taken his own life. We all were devastated.

What circumstances led this veteran to the point where he could not go on? We now know he had some problems, just like all of us. Money troubles, family issues and the lack of meaningful employment, coupled with the stress of having been deployed, all probably played a role in his decision.

Yes, as military members, we all have been where he was. But what makes someone think he can't go on with life?

I don't know if we ever will have the answers to a question like that. Having been in the military for more than 20 years, I have been to countless briefings on suicide and suicide prevention. In the aftermath of my friend's death, however, I had many questions for myself. Why did I not see this coming? What could I have done to make it possible for this young man to still be here today, enjoying his family, friends and life?

In truth, it is possible that no one could have stopped my friend from taking his life. When someone decides he wants to commit suicide, it can be difficult to recognize the warning signs and get him the help he needs. But we need to be aware of the signals that someone might be contemplating such an action. Any of the following could be potential warning signs that someone is thinking of committing suicide:

Depression. Individuals contemplating suicide experience many different emotions, including sadness, hopelessness and anxiety. Depression usually includes a loss of interest in life and the things that are happening around the depressed person. Major depression, when discovered in time, can be treated through medication and therapy.

Talking about dying. Those who are considering suicide will often think about various methods for killing themselves. They'll sometimes discuss with others different ways in which they can die. They may also be thinking about ways in which others have killed themselves.

Sleep patterns. Someone who's depressed and considering suicide may experience a change in sleeping habits. A depressed person may move from following a regular schedule to sleeping for long periods of time or, alternately, to becoming hyperactive, restless and not sleeping at all.

Concentration. A loss of focus at work or in school, as well as in extracurricular activities, may also be a symptom of depression. If you notice someone is not putting as much effort into life as usual, it can be a sign that he or she is depressed.

Change in eating habits. Many times those considering suicide will experience either a loss of or extreme increase in appetite. Depressed people may gain or lose a lot of weight over a short period of time.

Low self-esteem. Feelings of worthlessness and guilt often play a part in the desire to commit suicide. Those contemplating taking their own lives may also suddenly seem not to like anyone else.

Lack of goals. Those who are contemplating suicide will exhibit a disinterest in the future and in any goals they have previously wanted to reach. They'll also seem to not care

about current events happening around them that relate to the future.

Making arrangements. People thinking about suicide may start arranging for someone to take care of their animals or possessions. They may also begin giving away possessions that are important to them. Some make out wills in order to be sure that everything is taken care of after they're gone.

Loss of control. Outbursts of anger or sadness that happen without warning are sometimes a symptom of depression and thoughts of suicide. This loss of control may also include harming or directing harm toward others.

History. The loss of a loved one, job, relationship, money, friend or even religious beliefs may lead to suicidal ideations. The decision to stop attending events may also be a sign that someone is losing interest in life.

What should you do if you recognize the signs that someone may be thinking of committing suicide? People who receive support from caring friends and family, and who have access to mental health services, are less likely to act on suicidal impulses than those who are socially isolated.

Don't be afraid to ask a relative, friend or acquaintance directly if he or she is depressed or thinking about suicide.

If you become concerned that someone you know is at risk for suicide, don't leave that person alone. If possible, ask for help from his or her family or friends. Try to keep everyone involved in the situation calm.

Ask the person to give you any weapons he or she might have. Take away or remove sharp objects or anything else that the person could use to hurt himself or herself.

In some cases, the person is just looking for the chance to talk about his or her feelings and just needs to know that someone cares. It's fine to listen, but you should then encourage him or her to seek professional help.

Call 911 or take the person to an emergency room.

Can suicide be prevented? In many cases, it can't with any certainty, but the likelihood of suicide can be reduced with timely intervention. Research suggests that the best way to prevent suicide is to know the risk factors, be alert to the signs of depression and other mental disorders, recognize the warning signs, and intervene before the person can complete the process of self-destruction.

For senior leaders, it's our job to take care of the troops. Get to know those serving under your direction. Ask them questions, and show you care for their well-being. Your genuine concern for your Airmen may be just what they need to help them realize that someone cares for them and that they will be taken care of should they enter a time of crisis. ★

(Lis is a member of the 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.)

FAMILY REUNION



Exercise Key Resolve 2013 gave Brig. Gen. William O. Welch (center) and his son, 2nd Lt. Benjamin Welch (right) the chance to work together professionally for the first time. Ironically, the exercise was also the last time the two would work together, as General Welch retired from the Air Force Reserve June 7. Maj. Andres I. Lopez (left) served as Lieutenant Welch's boss during the exercise.

Father, son team up to tackle exercise in Korea

By Laura Dermarderosiansmith

Exercise Key Resolve 2013 will always be a special event in the lives of two Air Force Reserve officers. It not only marked the first time 2nd Lt. Benjamin Welch and his father, Brig. Gen. William O. Welch, worked together professionally, but it was also the last time, as the general retired June 7.

Lieutenant Welch, a member of the 610th Security Forces Squadron at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, participated in the exercise after his father suggested he apply for the role as force protection adviser for United States Forces Korea. The general said the slot has traditionally been hard to fill with a qualified candidate, and he knew his son was qualified to handle the job.

General Welch, who was the deputy assistant chief of staff, USFK, United Nations Command, Yongsan Army Garrison, Seoul, South Korea, also thought that with the Department of Defense shifting its focus from Southwest Asia to the Pacific and all of the attention it is paying to North Korea's nuclear testing and missile launches, the exercise would be a great learning experience for someone like his son.

"It is a great opportunity for a young officer to participate in a very dynamic, full-spectrum military exercise," General Welch said. "You can learn more about joint and combined warfare in two weeks than most service men and women will learn in a

career," the general said.

"My hope," he said, "is that his experience will encourage other members of his unit and the Air Force Reserve as a whole to get involved with understanding the many requirements and find opportunities to serve in Korea."

The lieutenant's role was to advise the Joint Operations Center leadership, including his father, which, in turn, used the information to brief the USFK commander and Republic of Korea joint chief of staff on antiterrorism and force protection recommendations based off possible and actual threats.

The junior officer said working with his father overwhelmed him with pride but also made his job more stressful.

"On one hand, I was there, making a difference and doing it side by side with my father," Lieutenant Welch said. "But on the flipside, I didn't want to embarrass my father in a high-visibility situation. Man, say the wrong thing ... crash and burn."

The general, however, never had any doubts about his son's abilities to handle the job.

"He's a straight-shooter, honest, professional, driven to succeed," the general said, "Working with him was the highlight of my career.

"The image that sits most clearly in my mind was him and his boss, Major Lopez (Maj. Andres I. Lopez, U.S. Army Garrison-

Yongsan, South Korea), hunched over their work station with headsets on working through an issue," he said. "They were heads down, hard at work. This is partly because I had plenty of work for them to do, but it's also the nature of the major exercises in Korea. There's a lot of learning that goes on in those two weeks."

Both officers didn't seem to have any problems separating their personal relationship from their professional one and said only a few people knew they were related until the last day of the exercise.

"When the uniform goes on, you have to be a professional and put on your game face," Lieutenant Welch said. "I was a lieutenant, and he was a general, plain and simple."

"For me it's always been easy to separate being a dad and being a senior officer," the general said. "When I'm on the job, I focus on doing my job to the best of my ability. No favorites, no faking it. ... just 100 percent focus on the mission at hand."

Although the general and his son didn't find it hard to separate their personal and professional relationship while on duty, that didn't mean the general didn't do a little additional mentoring with his son after duty hours.

"I see that as my primary job," he said. "I mentor all of my troops at every opportunity, regardless of rank. When I see an opportunity to help one of my Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines achieve a sudden epiphany, I'm there for them. But, poor Ben had the joy of additional mentoring after work. Reminds me of when I was in grade school and my dad was the school principal. There was no escape!"

There may be no escaping further mentoring in the lieutenant's future as his footsteps are starting to follow his father's. General Welch said his son was always interested in what he did in the Air Force and wanted to serve as he served and have the ability to pursue a military and civilian career.

They both started out as enlisted Airmen, they both had dreams of becoming pilots, and they both had to forgo those dreams to pursue other military career choices due to circumstances beyond their control.

According to his father, the lieutenant was devastated over not being able to fly.

"He looked at me with very sad eyes and said, 'Dad my life's dream is over. What do I do now?'" the general said.

"To me, the answer was simple. Find another dream, I advised. Several months later, he told me that he was being considered for a security forces officer position in my former security forces squadron. He pursued that opportunity with more enthusiasm and desire than anything I'd ever seen him do before."

In addition to having the opportunity to work together, partic-



Both Brig. Gen. William O. Welch and his son, Ben, had dreams of becoming Air Force pilots. However, both had to forego those dreams to pursue other military career choices due to circumstances beyond their control.

ipating in Exercise Key Resolve was special for both son and father.

For the lieutenant, it was special because he is Korean American. He initially joined the Air Force Reserve to follow his father's example, but after some life experiences and wisdom, as he phrased it, he realized a deeper meaning for serving in the military.

"I saw how important it was to contribute to a country that has given my family so much," the lieutenant said. "I am a Korean American. Without U.S. involvement in the Korean War, undoubtedly my mother's family would not have survived the hardships of a torn country. I wouldn't exist. I had to give back for the fortunes I received."

As for General Welch, Osan Air Base, Korea, was one of his first assignments as a one-stripe security policeman and his last as a general officer.

"My career of nearly 38 years has been the most rewarding and fulfilling experience of my life," the general said. "My final duty in Korea during the past three years was a crowning achievement for my career. I reached the full height of personal and profes-

sional satisfaction."

Reflecting on his security forces career, General Welch said one of his most rewarding experiences came three years ago when he saw a reflection of himself in a young Airman posted at an entry control point.

"I still recall being a nervous one-striper checking ID cards of general officers and colonels against an entry access list," he said. "Thirty-five years later, I entered that same entry control point as a one-star general.

"There was a very professional (and nervous) one-striper working the entry control point. I looked her in the eye and said I had this same exact job 35 years ago when I was a one-stripe security policeman. She beamed a big smile and said, 'No way, sir!' Yeah, way, I said.

"As I started to take my leave, I paused, looked back at her and said I never let the bad guys get in. We're counting on you to do the same. Thanks for your service. She smiled and saluted. This encounter is etched into my memory forever."

And as for his son following in his footsteps, the general said he had already more than filled his boots.

"He's better educated and better trained to do the important mission of protecting our force on the ground than I ever was," General Welch said. "While I swell with pride upon seeing my son's footsteps tracking closely my own, I am more encouraged to know that (for our Air Force) it is his footsteps that will press on where mine leave off." ★

(Dermarderosiansmith is assigned to the 301st Fighter Wing public affairs office at NAS JRB Fort Worth.)

Victim's Advocates Play Critical Role After An Assault

(Editor's note: This is the second installment in a four-part series of articles defining and outlining the importance of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, resilience, and the wingman initiative, written from the personal perspective of a rape victim. This installment focuses on the important role victim's advocates play in the aftermath of a sexual assault. In addition to serving as a victim's advocate and being a civilian employee in the 301st Fighter Wing public affairs office at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, Dermarderosiansmith is also a member of the Air Force Reserve.)

People generally think rapists are strangers to their victims who jump out from behind bushes or break into homes, as was the case in my assault. But more often than not, they are acquaintances, peers, superiors or even "friends" of their victims. Findings contained in the Fiscal Year 2011 Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military showed those four groups of people comprised the majority of perpetrators of sexual assaults among military members.

I find it ironic that we join the military knowing we may go to war to face the enemy, but some people are forced to face another type of enemy from within our own ranks. I was raped by a stranger. I can't imagine being deployed with a group of people, trusting them with my life, only to have one of them sexually assault me. I can only begin to feel the emotional and psychological pain caused by that type of betrayal, not only from a fellow Airman but from leaders who might expect me to return to work alongside my rapist.

Sexual assault is no more a new phenomenon in the military than in the civilian community. However, I feel it is getting the attention it deserves because victims and their supporters finally had the courage to force leadership to acknowledge a problem does exist. In turn, leadership had the courage to take more decisive action.

In 2004, the Department of Defense looked into reports alleging sexual assaults on service members deployed to Iraq



Laura Dermarderosiansmith

and Kuwait. The department also investigated how it handled the treatment and care of victims, particularly in a combat theater of operations. By January 2005, the military implemented DOD Directive 6495.01, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy, and DOD Instruction 6495.02, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program Procedures, to combat a problem that had been largely ignored for years.

There are stories from service members, both men and women, as far back as Vietnam, who are coming forward after all these years to report being raped and sodomized by fellow service members. Many of them spent decades living with their secret, thus being denied a chance to heal — until now.

Judging by today's responses to sexual assault surveys, I can only

imagine the number of other people who never reported or spoke of their assaults. If they had, they might have felt ostracized by those within their group or left to bear a sense of blame and shame. It's important for victims to realize they are not to blame for the actions of others nor should they feel ashamed of what happened to them.

With this directive and instruction, military members now have a clear-cut definition of sexual assault, a range of treatment and support for the victims, and a system of accountability. Over the past six years, the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program has evolved from awareness and prevention training, response and reporting to the comprehensive program we know today to meet the needs of victims and their families.

Leaders at all levels of the military, from the secretary of defense on down, have made it clear that one case of sexual assault involving a military member victimizing another is too many. In a letter to Airmen dated Nov. 15, 2012, Gen. Mark Welsh III, Air Force chief of staff stated, "There is only one way to say this. ... there is no place for sexual assault in our Air Force. When it comes to combating this challenge, every Airman is either part of the solution or part of the problem."

I believe a part of the solution is awareness and training. Awareness in the sense of knowing what inappropriate and criminal conduct is as well as knowing people must be held accountable for their actions.

Each time I've conducted training and briefings for the sexual assault response coordinator at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, over the past six years, I see myself in many of the people in those training sessions. I'm ashamed to admit it, but sometimes I haven't paid attention to the material being presented in many of those training courses because it didn't have a personal connection or interest to me. Mostly, I couldn't see how the training would apply to me.

It took a long time for me to realize that I don't have to commit everything to memory, but I should at least pay attention to what our leaders are saying and realize it is important for me to know. I have to believe that they see a bigger picture that I don't; I have to trust that they see a trend that's developing that needs to be addressed before it has a negative effect on our ability to protect our nation.

There is a saying, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse." Considering all the mandatory training, stories written, posters, flyers and videos on sexual assault in the military, the Air Force could adjust that saying to, "Ignorance of the AFI is no excuse." By now, we've all had documented training, and no one can claim ignorance.

The SAPR program has three major areas military members should learn and understand: definitions of sexual assault and consent, types of reporting, and assistance available to victims.

Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. For many perpetrators, the most important part of that definition is overlooked: "victim does not or cannot consent." That's because they feel that if the other person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is unconscious, then their actions are not considered rape or sexual assault.

The bottom line is "no means no." It doesn't matter if two people initially make a fully conscience decision to engage in sexual conduct and one of them has a change of heart at any point. The act should end at the physical or verbal "no" and should never be initiated if a person is incapacitated. Just to be clear, the meaning of incapacitated is defined in the AFI and is not what someone interprets the meaning to be.

Sexual assault is a crime. But I felt more than that the night I was raped. Initially, I was annoyed that I was robbed. But I was more enraged that someone had the audacity to touch me, taking something else from me he had no rights to or permission.

For obvious reasons, it is important for victims to report

their assault. But no one should fault them if they can't. It's hard to talk about the details of a sexual assault to a close friend, let alone a stranger. Think about the number of times victims will have to tell that story to law enforcement members and medical personnel, as well as in the courtroom, if it gets to that point. It's difficult enough to have to psychologically recover from the attack. It's even more difficult to have to publicly relive it, multiple times, for other people.

These reasons alone make it easy to understand why some victims are reluctant to report their assault. The situation is made worse by the stories of people who have reported their

assault and the treatment they received afterward from those around them; perpetrators who escape justice; being subjected to working alongside their attackers; or being punished for a lesser crime like underage drinking while the rapists go unpunished. Adding to that list is the recent story about an officer who was tried in court, convicted and sentenced to a year in prison, only to have his conviction overturned by a commanding officer.

Victims don't want to be further victimized for reporting their assault. That's a huge price to pay

in addition to the physical, emotional and mental damage already suffered. For this reason, the SAPR program gives the victims the choice to confidentially disclose the assault so they can get the help they need.

There are two types of reporting: restricted and unrestricted. The only difference between the two is with the unrestricted report there will be a full investigation, and the perpetrator can be held accountable for his or her actions. A restricted report, as long as it is disclosed to a SARC, SAPR victim's advocate, health care professional or chaplain, remains confidential but can always be changed to an unrestricted report whenever the victim desires.

Although I can't fault victims for being hesitant about reporting their assault, I do feel it's important they at least file a restricted report to get the help they need. I know firsthand that going to the hospital after this kind of trauma isn't easy. Having someone like a SARC or VA can make all the difference to a victim, taking away the fear of not knowing what to do or navigating through the medical and recovery process.

SARCs and VAs provide support to the victims, acting as liaisons to get them the services and care they need. With both restricted and unrestricted reports, a VA will be assigned to the victim to help with crisis intervention, referrals and ongoing non-clinical support. The VA will also provide information on available options and resources.

I became a VA when the program started in 2006 because I felt like my experience gives me something to offer other victims. I remember what it was like to go through the confusing and embarrassing process from the time the police

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arrived to when I left the hospital. I wish I had a victim’s advocate available to me after I was raped. I still remember clearly how I was callously treated by the doctor and staff at the hospital. As an advocate, I represent the best interests and wishes of a victim and will do whatever it takes to prevent such treatment.

Thinking back to those who were part of my experience, I still feel a debt of gratitude to a detective on the scene. He had the compassion to see me through the evening, even though he wasn’t supposed to get that involved. I didn’t need an ambulance, so he took me to the nearest hospital with a rape crisis center — 25 miles away. Without his act of kindness, I would have been alone. It wasn’t that my friends wouldn’t have been there with me, but no one had any idea what to expect. From what we had heard, no one would have been able to be with me. Maybe at that time that was true, but we just didn’t know what to expect.

As it was, I stayed in the rape crisis center’s waiting room for quite a while before being interviewed. By then, I was physically hurting, particularly with a severe headache. I was told I couldn’t have any medication until I had X-rays taken. Then I was told the X-rays wouldn’t happen until after I was examined by the doctor.

During the interview, I felt as if I was bombarded with questions without any consideration to the pain I was in. Then, I was apathetically sent back to the waiting area. Nearly another hour elapsed before I was seen by a female practitioner.

Shortly before my examination, I was photographed from head to toe. That was the first time I had seen my backside as one big black-and-blue mark. When the practitioner arrived, she seemed upset that she was disturbed at such an early hour to come in and perform the forensic exam, and she made her feelings known during the pelvic exam.

Because so much time had passed, the detective had to leave, and I was left alone. The exam was finally finished, but then I was sent to get X-rays to rule out any head trauma. I waited alone again for some time before someone took me to the next building. Once there, I was again left alone, but this time I was in a hallway without even a place to sit.

Another hour passed, and the detective returned on his own time after his shift. He found me curled up alone on the floor in pain. He went to get assistance — something a VA would have done — and found a nurse who put me in an open room with a gurney for some comfort and privacy. But only a few minutes later, another nurse came by and forced me to leave the room, leaving me to return to the floor in the hallway.

Meanwhile, the detective had gone to find out why I was not already X-rayed. When he returned to find me back on the

floor, he demanded I be seen immediately. I wasn’t X-rayed immediately, but I was at least put in a wheel chair and off the floor.

When it was all clear for me to be able to take medication, the hospital wouldn’t give me even an aspirin. Instead, they sent me to a social worker. I had to endure a half hour of this person

explaining the available services. I’m sure her job was to ensure that she said what she was supposed to by hospital policy, but I neither heard nor understood anything she was saying. All I cared about at the time was relieving the pain. No matter how much I begged for even an aspirin, the rape center was reluctant to do the extra paperwork to give me what I wanted. At least that was the reason I was given. A victim’s advocate would have been able to work with me later to explain much of what the social worker had said and taken me to a drug store to get some medication for the pain.

Nearly eight hours passed from the time I arrived at the hospital until the time I got back home. I was fortunate that I had a detective who acted as my advocate for whatever amount of time he gave

me. The one regret I have is never filing a complaint with the hospital. At the time, I never looked at my treatment as being a part of hospital policy. Instead, I looked at it as the workers having a bad night. Regardless of the excuse, I’ve learned a lot over the past 23 years to stand up to such unacceptable treatment. That hospital experience showed me that a VA would have been my voice and my ears when I needed somebody the most.

The military’s handling of sexual assaults may not be perfect, but at least there is a program. It is evolving, and as more cases are reported, highlighting areas that need to be addressed, the program will change to meet the needs of the victims.

One prime example of this is the new Air Force’s special victims’ counsel, which provides victims with legal assistance and help navigating through the judicial process. As of Jan. 28, sexual assault victims have available to them active-duty judge advocates to help with legal representation, provide advice and advocate their interests to trial counsel, defense counsel and commanders; attend interviews they have with investigators, and trial and defense counsels; explain the investigation and military justice processes; and, above all, protect their privacy interests.

There are so many resources available to victims of sexual assault. There is the DOD Safe Helpline; Military OneSource; National Sexual Violence Resource Center; Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network; and National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence. More importantly, don’t overlook your installation’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Program. There is no reason for victims facing their assault alone.

A few years ago, the slogan for the April Sexual Assault Awareness Month was “Hurts One. Hurts All.” If you think about it, there is no issue in life that is truly one-sided. For every person experiencing a problem — depression, victim of a crime, medical issue, feelings of suicide, etc. — several more are affected by it at home and work.

I believe that for every situation there are ways to help, to prevent, even to lessen the impact. That’s probably why there are so many awareness campaigns. But the real question is how many of us actually familiarize ourselves with the basic information they convey?

I mentioned earlier I was never one to pay much attention to these campaigns. There was a time where I would just keep hitting the next arrow icon on the computer-based training just to get to the end-of-course exam. I’ve also watched the clock waiting for the class to end or looked around the room when facilitators are seeking answers to their questions and praying they wouldn’t single me out. I see the majority of people in class constantly looking down at their phones.

I never thought I would be raped, but it happened. I could

‘THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO SAY THIS. ... THERE IS NO PLACE FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT IN OUR AIR FORCE. WHEN IT COMES TO COMBATING THIS CHALLENGE, EVERY AIRMAN IS EITHER PART OF THE SOLUTION OR PART OF THE PROBLEM.’

Gen. Mark Welsh III
Air Force chief of staff

have heeded some of the messages in crime prevention campaigns and just may have prevented that attack had I been more vigilant. But, that’s not the important part of my message: I believe that in any incident, there’s a before, during and after. It doesn’t matter if it comes in the form of an attack or an illness, for example. We need to take precautions and pray we can prevent something from happening to us. But once we are afflicted, it’s a matter of what we do during the hardship and the road we choose after it.

There is a wealth of resources for people in both the civilian and military communities that can help anyone through any crisis or learn how to help others through a crisis. All it takes is reaching out and asking for that help. ★

Department of Defense directive defines key terms

Here are some important definitions taken from DOD Directive 6495.01, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy, and DOD Instruction 6495.02, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program Procedures.

Sexual assault: The intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, sodomy, and other unwanted sexual contact that is aggravated, abusive, or wrongful, or attempts to commit these acts.

Consent: Words or overt acts indicating a freely given agreement to the sexual conduct at issue by a competent person. An expression of lack of consent through words or conduct means there is no consent. Lack of verbal or physical resistance, or submission, resulting from the assailant’s use or threat of force or placing another person in fear does not constitute consent. A current or previous dating relationship by itself, or the manner of dress of the person involved with the accused in the sexual conduct at issue, shall not constitute consent. There is no consent where the person is sleeping or incapacitated due to age, alcohol, drug or mental incapacity.

Restricted report: This reporting option does NOT trigger an investigation. The command is notified that “an alleged sexual assault” occurred but is not given the victim’s name or other personally identifying information. Restricted reporting allows service members and military dependents who are adult sexual assault victims to confidentially disclose the assault to specified individuals — sexual assault response

coordinator, victim’s advocate or health care personnel — and receive health care treatment and the assignment of a SARC and VA.

Unrestricted report: This reporting option triggers an investigation and command notification, and allows a person who has been sexually assaulted to access medical treatment and counseling.

SARC: The SARC reports directly to the installation wing commander (or equivalent) and executes the Air Force’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program at the installation level. The SARC serves as the installation’s single point of contact for integrating and coordinating sexual assault victim care services. Services may begin at the initial report of sexual assault and continue through disposition and resolution of issues related to the victim’s health and well-being. The SARC shall assist unit commanders as necessary to ensure victims of sexual assault receive the appropriate responsive care.

VA: Air Force victim advocates provide essential support, liaison services and care to victims of sexual assault. The VA ensures victims continue to receive the necessary care and support until the victim states or SARC determines that support is no longer needed. A VA’s responsibilities include providing crisis intervention, referral and ongoing non-clinical support, including providing information on available options and resources to assist the victim in making informed decisions about the case. VAs do not provide counseling or other professional services. ★

Thunderbolted

Barksdale bids farewell to its final A-10s; fighter group's 50-year run comes to an end

Story by Staff Sgt. Katherine Holt, photos by Master Sgt. Jeff Walston

A 33-year affiliation with the A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft came to an end at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., June 24.

The departure of the base's final three A-10s, belonging to the Air Force Reserve's 917th Fighter Group, came about three months before the group is scheduled to be inactivated. With the inactivation in late September, the group's 50-year run at Barksdale will come to an end.

The inactivation was included as part of the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act.

Airmen and members of the community gathered on the flight line to say goodbye to the A-10s in a farewell ceremony. The aircraft will have a new home at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

"While today is somewhat sad as we are going to fly the last Barksdale A-10s to their new home, really today is about celebrating the impact of the 917th," said Col. John Breazeale, the group's commander. "Today is about the thousands of 917th Airmen and their service to our nation."

The 917th was originally formed Jan. 17, 1963, at Barksdale as the 917th Troop Carrier Group assigned to the 435th Troop Carrier Wing. Its mission was to administer and support its assigned 78th Troop Carrier Squadron, which was equipped with C-124s.

Breazeale said the 917th has much to be proud of.

"Today we celebrate the Airmen who activated the group in

1963," he said. "I guarantee they had no idea what the next 50 years would bring, for Barksdale or the 917th. Today we celebrate the hundreds of lives saved or protected by 917th Airmen over the skies in Bosnia in the 1990s and, most recently, in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

"The 917th FG proudly served our nation at Barksdale and deployed locations for over 50 years. It has been an honor to be a part of Team Barksdale and the local community."

"The departure of the last three A-10s was a sad event for me and for the Reserve," said Col. Jonathan Ellis, 307th Bomb Wing commander. "The A-10 Thunderbolts have been a fixture in the skies over the community for decades, and the unit closure will have a deep impact on all the Reserve family. The 307th Bomb Wing team stands ready to lend a hand in whatever fashion we can to make the transition for the fighter group as smooth as possible."

Though this is the end of the A-10 era at Barksdale, Ellis is ready for the future.

"I am excited about the future of Reserve operations at Barksdale and look forward to bringing a number of 917th FG members on board as we continue to define the future of B-52 operations across the enterprise," he said. ★

(Holt is assigned to the 2nd BW public affairs office at Barksdale AFB, while Walston works in the 307th BW public affairs office.)

Col. James Travis, 47th Fighter Squadron commander, gives a double fist pump as he taxis an A-10 Thunderbolt II on the ramp at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., June 3. Travis was piloting one of six A-10s being transferred to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., on that day. The transfer of all the A-10s from Barksdale is due to the recent Force Structure Action Implementation Plan that dictates the 917th Fighter Group and 47th FS at Barksdale will be inactivated this year on the last day of September.

Col. John Breazeale, 917th Fighter Group commander, salutes a line of Airmen as he taxis to the runway for his last takeoff in an A-10 from Barksdale Air Force Base, La., June 24.



‘IT’S UP TO YOU’

Recruiters need the help of all Reservists to keep the ranks filled

By Staff Sgt. Heather Skinkle

Uncle Sam wants YOU! That’s just one of many slogans recruiters have used over the years to market the armed forces and help them bring civilians into the ranks of the military.

Since the Civil War, recruiters have performed this crucial role. They became even more vital in 1972, when conscription ended and the military became an all-volunteer force.

So how do recruiters recruit? A charming smile and winning delivery are helpful. But within the Air Force Reserve, recruiters take advantage of a cache of resources at their disposal to help fill the ranks.

But their most effective tool isn’t the latest gadget or gizmo.

Their secret weapon is Reservists!

“It’s our Reservists’ dedication to building a highly motivated Air Force Reserve that enables us to continually reinforce our team,” said Col. Steven Fulaytar, Air Force Reserve Recruiting Service commander.

Two years ago, Senior Airman Bridget Motta’s husband provided her name via the Get1Now website, and she was quickly contacted by a recruiter. Motta, now a member of the 310th Force Support Squadron at Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., previously served on active duty and missed being in uniform.

“I’m so glad I joined the Air Force Reserve,” she said. “I have a family now, and the Reserve affords me the flexibility to care for my family and still contribute to the Reserve’s mission.”

Motta’s enthusiasm for the Reserve, like her husband’s two years ago, led her to use the Get1Now program by providing the names of potential recruits.

“I’ve referred three people through the Get1Now referral program,” Motta said. “I really enjoy the Reserve, so I tell my friends about the sense of job satisfaction, job security, competitive pay and educational benefits you receive.”

Lately, though, the program is experiencing a lull in usage, but because of the program’s proven successes, leaders are confident in its resurgence.

“Challenge yourself and Reservists around you to recommend a potential lead on the website, and I have no doubt the program will continue to be our most successful way of con-

tacting future Airmen,” Fulaytar said.

Recruiters agree that the program is effective in helping them do their jobs, but they say it needs some tweaking to regain its former popularity. Reserve leaders agree and say an updated program is on the horizon.

“The re-launch of the Get1Now referral program includes rebranding and an updated website to increase awareness,” Fulaytar said.

A website can only do so much, so physically getting out there and talking with Reservists is the program’s lifeblood, the colonel said.

Talking about the Get1Now program is a good way to get leads throughout the year and keep Reservists interested in providing contacts in a fun and interesting way, said Senior Master Sgt. Pasquale Muoio, a flight chief recruiter at Joint Base Andrews, Md.

Newcomers’ briefings and commander’s calls are just two ways to get the word out and spread enthusiasm for the program, Muoio said. An enthusiastic commander or chief can also be a great asset in communicating the program’s benefits, he said.

Although the awards system is changing, the program, with a 27 percent enlistment rate over the last five years, is still a vital tool in gathering leads that have a higher chance of joining the Reserve than off-the-street candidates.

“When I interview a person referred through Get1Now, he already has a good foundation for what the Air Force Reserve is about because of his Reservist connection, so it’s a much easier transition for him than a lead from, say, our 1-800 number,” Muoio said.

While stationed at Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station, N.Y., the sergeant experienced his highest success with the program.

“Leads gathered from the program turned into an average 50 accessions per year for our Reserve wing,” he said. “That’s significant compared to the 10 accessions a year I’m getting now.”

Even with decreased accessions, some recruiters insist on seeing the brighter side of things.

“It’s up to recruiters to work a little harder and stress to the Reservists the sense of service, accomplishment and camaraderie an enlistee may get,” said Master Sgt. Dawn Serakowski, a line recruiter with the 911th Airlift Wing at Pittsburgh IAP ARS, Pa.

Although the program may have been more popular with unit members because of the prizes such as iPods and concert tickets, some argue the flashy gifts were more of a hindrance than a help.

“The referrals took a dip in quality the higher quality the prizes became,” Serakowski said.

Serakowski and other recruiters welcome the upcoming program changes.

“We had strayed from what the program was really intended for, and that’s putting quality people in the Air Force Reserve,” she said. “Referring quality people and working with your friends should be prize enough.”

Recruiters aren’t the only ones who believe in the program.

“We definitely need programs like this, especially with prior-service people involved,” said Senior Airman Jamie Link, a prior-service security forces member from Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga. “Unless you’re in high school, Reserve recruiters aren’t actively seeking you out to join. But with this program, prior-service people won’t be lost in the shuffle.”

Link had reservations about joining the military again, especially since she now has a family and had a lengthy break in service. But her recruiter swept those fears away.

“He told me that if I wanted it badly enough, I could make it happen,” she said.

Thankfully, she listened to him and has rediscovered her sense of purpose. Though she said she loves security forces, she’s excited to start her upcoming job as a chaplain’s assistant.

But whatever job she’s doing, Link said she is passionate about the Air Force Reserve.

“I like feeling part of something larger than myself again,” she said. “On a small scale, we create jobs here at home, plus, on a larger scale, we deploy and can deliver life-saving supplies overseas.”

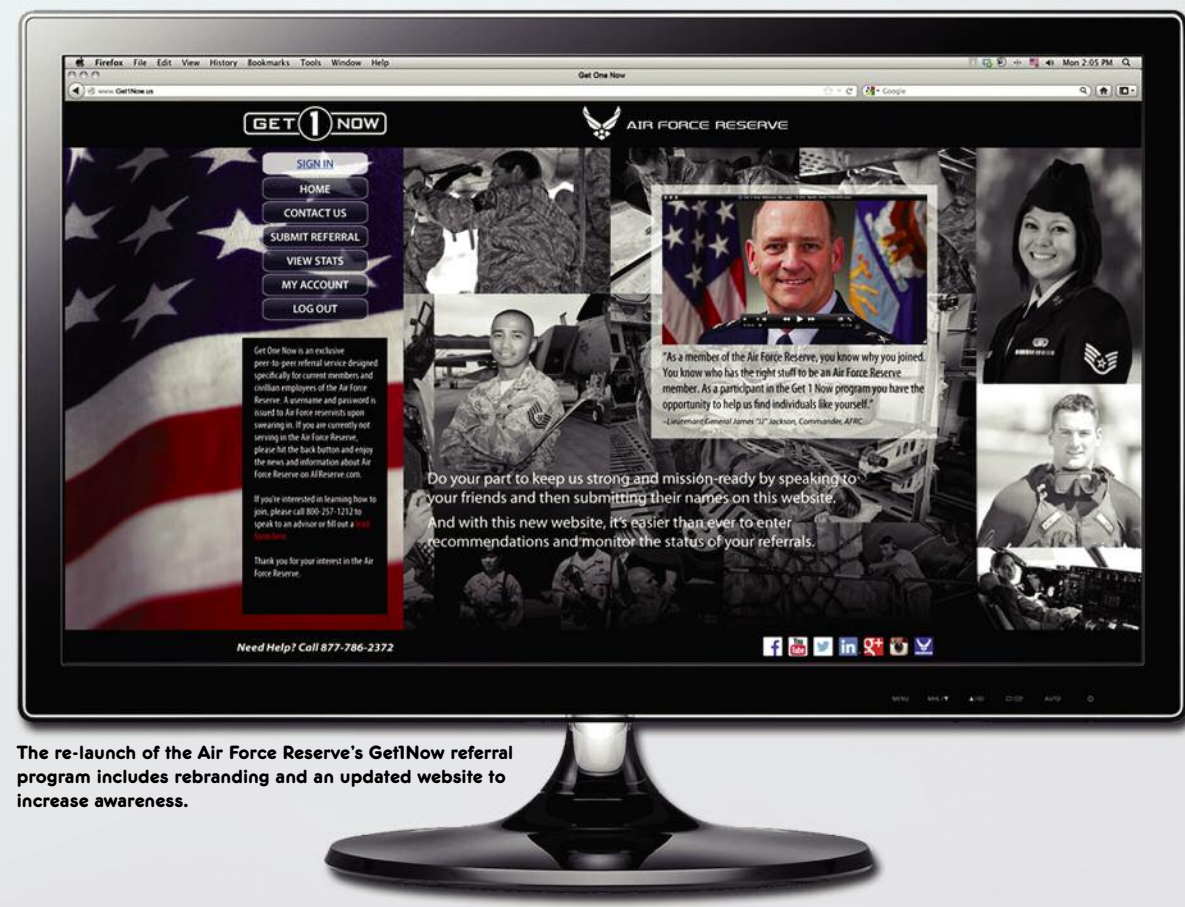
The mission at home and abroad requires people to be a success, so recruiting is key, and most recruiters seem to recognize how special their job is in contributing to the Air Force Reserve mission.

“I have a lot of job satisfaction,” Miller said. “I know how great the Reserve has been in my life, so to be able to offer this opportunity to others and help them achieve their goals ... that’s amazing.”

Whether recruiters touch base with a Reservist in person or through the Get1Now website, most are mindful that recruiting isn’t just about the numbers. It’s about finding quality people who can become the next generation of Air Force Reserve leaders. But they can’t do it alone.

“We want you, our Reservists, to help choose those you serve with, whether it’s a friend, relative, neighbor, co-worker or a classmate. It’s up to you,” Fulaytar said. ★

(Skinkle, a Reservist assigned to the 419th Fighter Wing public affairs office at Hill AFB, Utah, wrote this article while serving a temporary duty assignment with the Air Force Reserve Recruiting Service at Robins AFB, Ga.)



The re-launch of the Air Force Reserve’s Get1Now referral program includes rebranding and an updated website to increase awareness.



Rodney and Sasha Glassman have written two children's books and have a third in the works. They distribute their books free to students in their community.

For the kids

Reservist, wife team up to promote literacy, environmental issues

By Bo Joyner

An Air Force Reservist and his wife have turned their passion for literacy and the environment into a series of children's books that haven't proven to be a big hit with youngsters in their native Arizona.

Capt. Rodney Glassman, an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the staff judge advocate's office at the 355th Fighter Wing, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., and his wife, Sasha, also an attorney, have written two children's books so far and have another in the works.

The protagonist in their stories is a jackrabbit named Jeremy, who cares deeply about his environment and shares what he learns about sustainment and recycling with school-age children.

"One of the unique things about our books is that we don't make money from selling them," Rodney said. "We distribute them free to students in our community."

The couple finished their first book, "Jeremy Jackrabbit Harvests the Rain," in 2010 while they were living in Tucson.

They were able to give a copy to every kindergartner in Pima County, a total of more than 14,000 children.

They finished their second book, "Jeremy Jackrabbit Recycles the Can," earlier this year while living in Phoenix and gave a free copy to every kindergartner in Maricopa County (46,000 copies) and distributed another 6,000 copies to youngsters back in Tucson. The Glassmans also delivered books to children at Davis-Monthan and nearby Luke AFB.

Another neat thing about the Glassman's books is that all of the illustrations are done by kids.

"We write the rhymes and then work with the school systems and librarians to hold contests where kids can submit illustrations for the books," Rodney said.

"It's amazing to see the faces of the kids when they see their drawings in a real book," Sasha said. "For our latest book, we had a book signing, and the kids who did the illustrations each got to set up at a table and sign copies of the book. It was an amazing experience. The kids were just so proud."

For that book, Sasha and the graphic artists who helped put the book together had to pick from among nearly 1,000 drawings submitted by kindergartners through eighth-graders.

Rodney said he first got the idea for writing children's books in 2009 while attending the Tucson Festival of Books.

"I remember calling Sasha from the festival and asking her what she thought about teaming up to write a book for kids," he recalled. "She seemed to like the idea, and we were off and running."

It didn't take long for the couple to decide what their first book should be about. Sasha was finishing her master of business administration degree in sustainable energy and finance at the time, and Rodney, who also holds a Ph.D. in arid land resource sciences, had recently drafted the nation's first mandatory rainwater harvesting, gray-water plumbing and solar-powered water heating ordinances while a Tucson city councilman. So, they settled on sustainability. In the book, Jeremy learns from his friends in the desert about the importance of reusing water in easy and fun ways.

In the second book, Jeremy learns from an assortment of desert creatures how he can reduce, reuse and recycle for a greener tomorrow. The couple is currently writing their third book, "Jeremy Jackrabbit Captures the Sun."

Finding the time to bounce ideas off of each other and put together rhymes to teach the concepts they want students to learn is no easy task. Professionally, Rodney is currently serving as the interim town manager of Cave Creek, Ariz., Furthermore, in addition to their legal careers, Rodney's Reserve duty and a host of community volunteer commitments, the Glassmans are also the parents of two young girls: Rose, 2, and Ruth, 8 months.

"It's definitely a challenge to find the time, but this is something we are passionate about," Sasha, who currently serves on the governing board of the Madison Elementary School District, said. "As the parents of two young girls, we know how important it is that we teach children to take care of their environment."

Rodney's ties to the Air Force helped the couple overcome one of the first hurdles they encountered when they decided to write a book for kids.

"Writing the book is one thing, but then you have to have a publisher," he said.

"I was actually attending a JAG training course (at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery (Ala.)) and was in the car with a bunch of my classmates. We were driving to a Montgomery Biscuits baseball game, and I was on the phone with Sasha talking about how we could find a publisher for our book. One of my classmates, Capt. Dean Korsak, an active-duty JAG, said from the back seat, 'I own a publishing company. If you are able to raise the money for your project but would like to have a publisher with an ISB (international standard book) number, bar code and Library of Congress number, I can help.'"



As a Reservist, Glassman is an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the staff judge advocate's office at the 355th Fighter Wing, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

With a publisher on board, Rodney began looking for funding.

"We had deep ties with the Tucson community, so I was able to generate a good deal of financial support for the book," he said.

The first book was such a success that the couple decided to continue the Jeremy Jackrabbit series after moving to Phoenix.

"Having people like the Glassmans take an active role in the education of children at Madison speaks directly to our purpose statement, 'Extraordinary Learning for All,'" said Dr. Tim Ham, superintendent of the Madison Elementary School District in Maricopa County. "We consider ourselves very fortunate to have these champions of literacy as active participants in the Madison community."

"It's been amazing to see how Jeremy has grown," Rodney said. The second book

has a Spanish translation on each page, a recycling guide at the end and a related classroom curriculum to help teachers reinforce the messages that Jeremy introduces to kids, he said.

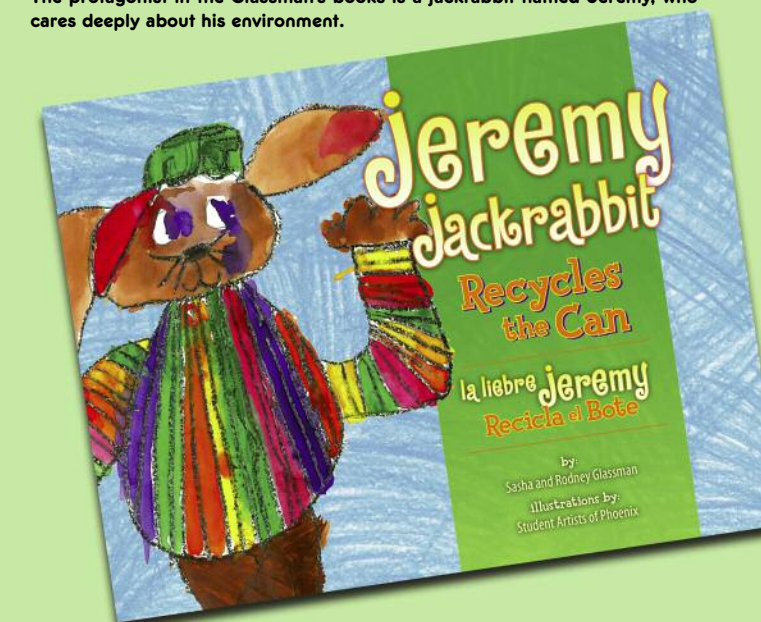
Arizona State University's President Dr. Michael Crow took the time to write the book's forward and ASU's Global Institute of Sustainability has written seven lesson plans that are aligned with common core standards so teachers can teach hands-on lessons along with distributing the book. Jeremy even has his own Web page, www.jeremyjackrabbit.com.

In addition, Jeremy is scheduled to hit the stage soon. The Great Arizona Puppet Theater is producing a musical of "Jeremy Jackrabbit Recycles the Can" that is scheduled to run this fall.

The Glassmans said they aren't sure what the future holds for Jeremy Jackrabbit after the third book in their series, but they would love to see other aspiring children's authors take their model and run with it.

"What we are doing could be done anywhere," Sasha said. "It's a great way to get kids involved and excited about learning." ★

The protagonist in the Glassman's books is a jackrabbit named Jeremy, who cares deeply about his environment.





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